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DIE REFORMATION UND GEGENREFORMATION IN DEN INNERÖSTERREICHISCHEN LÄNDERN IM XVI. JAHRHUNDERT. Von DR. JOHANN LOSERTH, Professor der Geschichte in Graz. Stuttgart: Verlag der J. G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung Nachfolger, 1898. Pp. viii + 614. M. 12.

DR. LOSERTH has gained a world-wide reputation as a historical investigator and as a historiographer, through his long-continued researches in connection with the Wiclifite movement in England, the Hussite movement in Bohemia and Moravia, and the Anabaptist movement in Austria and its dependencies. For several years he has devoted a large part of his leisure to the editing of Wiclif's works for the Wiclif Society of England. The materials on the history of the Anabaptists of Austria, to the collection of which the late Dr. J. von Beck, the famous jurist, devoted many years of research and a large amount of money, came into Loserth's hands, and he has already published, on the basis of this thesaurus, several volumes of exceeding value, besides a number of articles in reviews and in the proceedings of historical societies. He has gathered and arranged the materials for a history of the Anabaptists of Austria; but other literary engagements, he informs the reviewer, that it will require ten years to fulfil, have compelled him to lay aside for the present this very important undertaking.

The present work, the author explains in his preface, is an outgrowth of several years' studies on the constitutional and administrative history of Styria under the archduke Karl II. The important place occupied by ecclesiastical questions during this reign is well known. The work is divided into two books, of fifteen and sixteen chapters respectively. Book I treats of "The Reformation in Inner Austria;" Book II, of "The Counter-Reformation under Karl II. (1578-1590)."

The author begins by describing the religious and ecclesiastical condition of Inner Austria (a term used to designate Styria, Carinthia, Carniola, and Görz) during the later mediæval time. In few parts of Europe had the Waldenses and related parties rooted themselves more firmly. The contiguity of this region to Bohemia and Moravia caused its inhabitants to come under the influence of the Hussite movement and its derivatives. Nowhere, it is probable, were the clergy more shamelessly corrupt. They lived in open concubinage and intemperance, and their financial administration was in the highest degree oppressive and dishonest. The higher ecclesiastical authorities made

frequent but ineffective efforts at outward reform, and the complaints of the common people and the nobles were unceasing. Licentiousness seems to have been well-nigh universal, tavern-haunting was a common vice, and the keeping of public resorts for drinking and its accompaniments was by no means an uncommon clerical occupation. In some cases the clergy put aside their priestly attire and used civilians' clothes as more in keeping with their secular and vicious pursuits. The traffic in benefices and ecclesiastical goods was most scandalous. Many parishes were left entirely destitute of preaching, and even of priestly ceremonies, and were thus an easy prey for wandering preachers, monkish or heretical.

By 1522 the influence of the Protestant revolution had begun to make itself felt in Inner Austria, and numerous popular writings calculated to bring the clergy into contempt were widely circulated. The Peasants' War of 1524-5 greatly increased the popular discontent with existing ecclesiastical conditions, and from this time onward Lutheranism made rapid strides. The demand for the preaching of the "pure and unfalsified gospel" became almost universal. The inroads of the Turks on the Austrian possessions were regarded by Lutherans as well as by Anabaptists as a scourge of God. For more than fifty years the Habsburg princes were handicapped in their efforts to suppress Protestantism by the pressure of the Turks and the necessity of conciliating the provinces in which the Augsburg Confession had secured the mastery.

An official visitation of the church communities of Inner Austria in 1528 made manifest a wide-spread defection from the Roman Catholic faith, and a general disposition to let the Turks administer the scourging for which God had raised them up. Lutherans joined heartily with King Ferdinand in exterminating measures against the Anabaptists, who at about this time spread with great rapidity in Upper and Inner Austria, the Tyrol, etc.

By 1542 the nobles of Inner Austria, including lords and knights, and a very large proportion of the citizens of the towns and villages, were Lutherans of a very pronounced type. The Habsburgers were utterly helpless. It was their hope, and that of many of the Lutheran nobles, that a general council would bring about a harmonizing of creeds and heal the schism. Little effort was made in the meantime to check the Protestant movement in Austria.

The defeat of the Protestants of Germany by the emperor and his allies in the Schmalkald War (1548) seemed a favorable occasion for

beginning the process of restoring Catholicism in Inner and Upper Austria. A provincial synod for Salzburg was held in 1549 to take measures for extirpating Protestantism. But even now the nobles were uncompromising, and the Habsburg princes were not in a position to employ coercive measures.

The Augsburg Peace of 1555, which represented a great Protestant victory, was so interpreted by the Inner Austrian nobles as to justify their demand for the exclusive toleration of Lutheranism within their domains ; while the Habsburg rulers interpreted it as a warrant for the exclusion of Protestantism from the territory over which their suzerainty extended. From this time onward until the Pacification of Bruck (1578) the relations between the Habsburg rulers and the nobles were strained to the last degree. Ferdinand, emperor from 1556 to 1564, though intensely Catholic, felt obliged to compromise with the Lutherans of Austria. The archduke Karl II. was constantly seeking for means to suppress the aggressive Lutheran movement. For years every request made upon the estates for financial assistance was met by a stern demand for the formal recognition of the right of the Lutheran nobles to their religion, and the right of the third estate (cities and villages) to Protestant worship. Ferdinand and Charles both felt obliged to grant freedom of conscience to the nobles ; but claimed that the cities and towns were directly under their own rule, and that as Catholics they could not with a good conscience tolerate heresy therein. With the utmost reluctance the Habsburgers were obliged to yield point by point, by reason of the persistent refusal of the nobles to grant financial aid until their religious rights were guaranteed. A certain degree of toleration was at last extended to the principal cities. In 1578 the archduke felt constrained to grant in a somewhat ambiguous way the religious privileges demanded by the nobles.

It must be admitted that the concession (Pacification of Bruck) was extorted from Karl, and that he despised himself from the first for having so far compromised himself and the Catholic cause. He was already under the influence of the Jesuits, who some years before had been invited to labor in Inner Austria, and whose presence made the nobles all the more determined to secure a guarantee of their rights before it was too late. From this time onward, Jesuit, papal, Bavarian, and imperial influence coöperated with that of Karl's Bavarian wife, a fanatical Catholic, and his own strong inclinations, in devising means for the utter extirpation of Lutheranism from his domains.

The author has fully utilized the correspondence of the times, the careful records of public and private conferences, and all the exceedingly full and well-preserved archival materials, for giving us an inside view of the process by which the Counter-Reformation was inaugurated and carried out to its bitter end. The emperor Maximilian II. (1564-76) had pursued and counseled a course of compromise and conciliation; but his advice was Jesuitical in a high degree and looked forward to the ultimate destruction of Lutheranism. After his death all the influences brought to bear upon Karl were uncompromisingly in favor of the re-Catholization of his territory. He was led to believe that the salvation of his soul and the permanent holding of his hereditary possessions depended on his remorseless persecution of heretics. At a conference of Catholic princes at Munich (October, 1579) Karl was urged to enter with vigor upon the work, and the princes bound themselves mutually to give each other all needful assistance in suppressing rebellion among their subjects. Protestant court officials and military commanders were at once to be displaced, competent Catholics from other provinces being supplied when needful. The dangers of Turkish invasion were now somewhat remote, and the Counter-Reformation could be undertaken with a good will. The Jesuits were already present in force, and they were ready to be the chief instruments in the destruction of Protestantism. One by one all the rights of the Protestants were withdrawn. The Lutheran cause was from this time doomed. The process was well-nigh completed by the death of Charles, in 1590.

The Protestants struggled heroically, as long as successful resistance seemed possible. Nowhere do we find a nobler type of Lutheranism than in this region. No country in Europe was readier to throw off the papal yoke and to adopt evangelical Christianity. Apart from Habsburg rulers, Romanism would have been swept away almost without resistance. Habsburg conservatism and Jesuit zeal were more than a match for the sturdy Lutheran nobles. Loserth has done for the Lutherans of Inner Austria what Dr. Henry M. Baird has done for the Huguenots of France. We feel that we are in the hands of a master, on the accuracy, fulness, and fairness of whose narrative we can place implicit reliance.

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